

February 4, 2012

A special meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Bayou Lafourche Fresh Water District was held on Saturday, February 4, 2012 at 9:30 a.m. in the Nicholls State University Captain's Room, Student Union Building, Thibodaux, LA

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| Present were: Hugh Caffery, Chairman | Dr. Darby Chiasson |
| Gene Harrell, Vice-Chairman | Larry Dugas |
| Robert Thibodaux, Secretary/Treasurer | Gene Harrell |
| Ron Animashaun | Greg Nolan |

Absent: None

Also present were: Archie Chaisson, Jr., Director; Stevie Smith, All South Consulting Engineers

Chairman Hugh Caffery stated that this is a historic occasion, and we need to be bold and go beyond where we think we can go because there are serious problems that this bayou has that this community is seriously dependent upon this for its life. There is no one that knows better of those problems than us. If we don't address them and find a solution, it is not going to get done.

Chairman Caffery advised that he distributed an agenda to the Board. He stated that he wants to review the following today: 1) purpose and goals of the retreat; 2) review of summit results; 3) review other input- CPRA and CH2MHill report; 4) development of goals and priorities; and 5) draft our Master Plan.

Chairman Caffery stated that we need to estimate the costs and find funding to: a) finish all items of the current dredge project; b) set up our Operations & Maintenance Manual; c) set up our millage renewal; d) determine how to remove all significant vegetative blockages; e) address the Terrebonne water needs and vote to join BLFWD; f) finish dredging to Thibodaux; g) Install railroad culverts so we don't flood Donaldsonville; h) increase flow to 100cfs; i) remove the Thibodaux weir. These are just some items that need to be done.

Chairman Caffery stated that this retreat is a cap stone to the efforts we have been making over the last six months. We have a final report of the summit. We need to come up with a Master Plan list of where we need to go. Where we need to go may not be where we think we can get at right now.

Mr. Stevie Smith gave an overview of what happened at the summit. He advised that there were a total of over two hundred recommendations and issues at the summit. They took the time to merge those recommendations in the summit report, and they are as follows:

The short term (1-3 years) recommendation is Capacity: a) Continue the dredging program; b) Refurbish existing pump station; c) Add harvesters to combat vegetation; and d) Perform hydrologic model of Bayou.

The long term (3-10years) recommendation related to Capacity: a) Maintain sand trap; b) Replace the railroad crossing at Donaldsonville; c) Remove weir at Thibodaux; d) Evaluate gate at Donaldsonville; and e) Replace pump station.

The next major recommendation is Coordination. Refine the BLFWD mission. There is a lot of interest in who is primarily responsible for managing all the different aspects of the bayou.

The next major category of recommendation is Funding. We could partner with the State, partner with the federal government, and partner with the parish and municipalities. Major funding decisions are how to manage the millage, how to manage the water rates, and how do we encourage or discourage Terrebonne to be a member or continue to be a customer.

The next major areas of recommendations are Communication and Public Awareness. a) Establish some type of task force for the District to communicate with customers and interested groups up and down the bayou; b) Develop a bayou report card, which would involve some people watching the bayou and report doing the good and bad things on the bayou; and c) Establish a 1-800-My-BAYOU number to call to report problems. Mr. Chaisson stated that it is up and working but it is not 1-800-MY-BAYOU. Mr. Chaisson stated that it is 1-855, and he has the number at the office and can get it for them. d) Making school visits up and down the bayou.

The next recommendation is Understanding the Physical System: a) Defining the drainage area feeding the bayou; b) Defining the target area for coastal restoration work; and c) a feasibility study of Bayou Terrebonne was a recommendation.

Commissioner Jake Giardina advised that maybe we need some type of catalog of the name, year, and topic of what the report or study is so that if we ever want to search that, we don't have to spend money to get things redone.

The summit included a day on recreation, tourism, and economic development related to the bayou. The discussion centered on beautification along the bayou, and easy access to the bayou. Another suggestion was to define the recreational uses of the bayou.

Mr. Smith stated that they took all the summit report information and organized it in a different way based on whether it is a long term or short term recommendation, the amount of money that it would take, and potential cost-share. It is called a five-year capital improvement budget. They also provided a document that shows recommendations that do not require capital expenditures.

Commissioner Robert Thibodaux asked how the railroad crossing at Donaldsonville would be replaced. Commissioner Jake Giardina answered that you would need to have an alternate route. Chairman Caffery stated that at the meeting on January 31st they had talked about putting more culverts under the current track, and not relocating the current track. Commissioner Giardina suggested to research if the railroad has a firm right-of-way.

Chairman Caffery advised that what impacted him at the meeting on Tuesday the 31st with CH2MHill and CPRA was not what we need to do, but the sequence of what we need to do about dredging. He was convinced that what we need to do is dredge from the weir in Thibodaux on north first, and then go back and dredge from the southern line of our project south.

Commissioner Robert Thibodaux commented that he felt they should dredge in the Belle Rose area first, and then dredge in Thibodaux. Chairman Caffery stated that CH2MHill recommended doing a bottom survey of the bayou.

A discussion was held regarding whether or not we should start patrolling the bayou for any areas where there is evidence of people putting trash and debris in the bayou. Commissioner Giardina stated that he would like to see an organizational chart of the District to see who is doing what, and if that is part of somebody's work assignment.

Commissioner Larry Dugas stated that we may have the same problem in Thibodaux that we had in Donaldsonville as far as bulkheads and wharves being on State land, and telling these people that they have to get the structures off of State land. Commissioner Giardina advised that he doesn't see that as being a problem down here that we had in Donaldsonville.

Chairman Caffery advised that he would like to start drafting our Master Plan, which will include the following:

- Finish all items of the current Dredge Project for which funds are now available.
- Tree planting, which we approved for Stevie Smith of All South Consulting Engineers at the January 31st meeting. Chairman Caffery stated that he has a follow-up letter from Stevie Smith on the tree planting.
- Analyze and give feedback on the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Manual on changes or recommendations to CPRA within the next month. The O&M manual shows a yearly estimated cost of channel maintenance of \$300,000 for the current dredge project.
- Set the millage renewal – The Board decided that the renewal election be held in November. Chairman Caffery stated that the millage renewal election could go longer than every ten years. It has to pass among all the legislators to go beyond ten years.
- Develop a plan to determine how much to increase the water usage fees.
- Terrebonne water needs, and them joining the District.
- Vegetation is a problem, and trying some new things to fix it. A discussion was held regarding a couple of suggestions to remove the hydrilla, such as using an anchor chain, or mounting two blades on the tug to cut the hydrilla.
- Continuation of the dredging program, not just in Thibodaux but as far as we should go based on the vegetation growth. We will do that based on some advice from CH2MHill.
- Increase flow through railroad track.
- Increase flow to 1000 cfs, which is implying that something needs to be done with the pumps. This would be done in the long range plan.
- Investigate the removal of the Thibodaux weir.

- We need a bathymetric survey of the bayou to find the depth of the water.
- Send out to residents' pictures of their property showing the boundary between their property, and the State property.
- Establish some type of task force for the District to communicate with customers and interested groups up and down the bayou.
- Develop a bayou report card.

Vice-Chairman Gene Harrell advised that the District needs to revisit our mission. Mr. Smith advised that the legislation of the District is relatively broad. It gives us the authority to do the things related to Bayou Lafourche, and there are a lot of ancillary things that we touched on today.

Mr. Smith stated that he will take this information, and write it into some type of a Master Plan.

Chairman Caffery stated that we need to set a timetable to review the draft again, and take some time at our next meeting to discuss it. We will adopt that plan at our February meeting, or at our March meeting.

Chairman Caffery advised that the February 20th Board meeting will be changed due to it being the day before Mardi Gras, and to also give the Board time to review the Master Plan. The meeting will be moved to February 27th. The adoption of the Master Plan will be at our March 19th Board meeting.

Chairman Caffery advised that he needs to find out from the Joe Harrison, Chairman of the Joint Senate and House Committee on Bayou Lafourche, when they meet. We will schedule a meeting with them at the end of March or early April.

Chairman Caffery stated that the building next door is being offered to us to make an offer to them. The appraisal is \$96,500. Some members of the Board have looked at the building, and he asked the feelings of the Board. Mr. Chaisson stated that the electrical was checked, and it will be three to four thousand dollars to repair the electrical. Mr. Al Badeaux checked the building and he advised that we check with the city because it is his understanding that as long you are not changing the occupancy of the building we would be grandfathered in. A guy will have an estimate next week on changing the front panels on the building that are damaged.

Moved by Commissioner Jake Giardina, seconded by Commissioner Dr. Darby Chiasson and unanimously approved to begin negotiations with the owner of the building next door starting with price of \$80,000, and up the appraised value of \$96,500 to purchase the building.

Moved by Commissioner Larry Dugas, and unanimously seconded the meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Hugh Caffery, Chairman

Robert Thibodaux, Secretary/Treasurer

